



**TOWN OF ACTON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

472 Main Street
Acton, Massachusetts, 01720
Telephone (978) 264-9612
Fax (978) 264-9630
E-mail: BOS@town.acton.ma.us

TEXT OF COMMENTS FOR 8/4/05 PUBLIC HEARING

My name is Lauren Rosenzweig. I am a Selectman, former Planning Board Chairperson, and long-time resident of Acton.

First, I would like to thank Acton's federal and state congressional delegations – particularly Congressman Meehan, Senator Resor, and Representatives Eldridge and Atkins for taking an active interest in this matter. We are confident that our elected officials will step forward to help the Town obtain from EPA an appropriate plan to clean up the pollution from the Grace superfund site that continues to contaminate some of the Town's main drinking water wells and aquifers.

I have a brief letter with attachments to submit this evening for the record on behalf of the Board of Selectmen, the Acton Water District, and the Acton Citizens for Environmental Safety.

All three of these entities will also be submitting extensive additional comments on EPA's Proposed Plan before the close of the public comment period.

On a more personal note, when I was elected Selectman, people voted for me knowing that I am the proverbial "soccer Mom" who would fight for the things that they also cared about for their families and their children. One of the most primary of these is the protection of the public health and the purity of our drinking water.

For over 25 years now we have known that there are pollutants that have contaminated our groundwater – some of which are known carcinogens. The EPA through the years has been an ally in helping us to identify the problems and get them cleaned up. This cooperative effort was done with much dialogue and transparency.

Now we find ourselves at a point where suddenly we feel betrayed. Though there are some aspects of EPA's proposed plan that are completely in line with our expectations, there are other portions, such as relying on Mother Nature and the Water District to clean up Grace's pollution in the Northeast Plume, that are completely unacceptable.

I have 2 boys at home—Jeremy and Max. When they spill their milk on our countertop I make them clean it up right away. They invariably try to argue—he did it, no he did it. Regardless, I hand them each a paper towel and they get busy wiping it up. We don't wait until it's dripping over the counter onto the floor, or seeping into the silverware drawer. We clean it up right away. Can you imagine either of them leaving the spilled milk there, and later at night when I notice it, one of them saying—"I'm not gonna clean it up, someone else can do it; besides, it's a pre-existing condition, it will go away in 25 years anyway"?

Well, that is what you, the EPA, are saying to us. That as the "parent" in this situation, you are not going to make the responsible party clean it up. You are regarding it as a pre-existing condition that the Water District and Mother Nature will clean up over the next 25 years. This is unacceptable.

Not just I, but the Board of Selectmen and many Acton residents reject EPA's proposed plan to rely on Mother Nature and the Acton Water District to clean up Grace's pollutants.

We are also greatly concerned with EPA's failure to recognize the importance of the well called WRG-3 as an irreplaceable water supply source in the Town. Your remedy must fully restore and protect WRG-3 and its aquifer so that the Town has a fully usable drinking water aquifer for the future.

In short, in its Proposed Plan, EPA should:

- Aggressively protect the public health and the environment.
- Require Grace to actively remove its toxic chemicals from the public drinking water aquifers.
- Force Grace – not the public – to pay to clean up this widespread pollution.
- Force Grace – not the public - to pay to remove Grace's chemicals from the public water supply.
- Ensure that these precious drinking water aquifers can be fully used now and in the future for the Town's drinking water wells.
- Require Grace to take all necessary means and measures to ensure that WRG-3 is fully usable as soon as possible and protected from Grace's pollution indefinitely.

The current plan does not do this. We hope that, on reflection, you will see the need to upgrade the plan to do so.

Thank you.